



Opinion

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Obama, Democrats got 88 percent of 2008 contributions by TV network execs, writers, reporters

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Senior executives, on-air personalities, producers, reporters, editors, writers and other self-identifying employees of ABC, CBS and NBC contributed more than \$1 million to Democratic candidates and campaign committees in 2008, according to an analysis by *The Examiner* of data compiled by the Center for Responsive Politics.

The Democratic total of \$1,020,816 was given by 1,160 employees of the three major broadcast television networks, with an average contribution of \$880.

By contrast, only 193 of the employees contributed to Republican candidates and campaign committees, for a total of \$142,863. The average Republican contribution was \$744.

Disclosure of the heavily Democratic contributions by influential employees of the three major broadcast networks follows on the heels of controversy last week when [it was learned](#) that media baron Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. contributed \$1 million to the Republican Governors Association.

The News Corp. donation prompted Nathan Daschle, executive director of the Democratic Governors Association and son of former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, to demand in a letter to Fox News chairman Roger Ailes that the cable news outlet include a disclaimer in its coverage of gubernatorial campaigns. Fox News is owned by News Corp., which also owns The Wall Street Journal.

The data on contributions by broadcast network employees was compiled by CRP at the request of *The Examiner* and included all 2008 contributions by individuals who identified their employer as one of the three networks or subsidiaries. The data does not include contributions by employees of the three networks who did not identify their employer.

The CRP is the organization behind [OpenSecrets.org](#), the web site that for more than a decade has put campaign finance data within reach of anybody with an Internet connection.

President Obama received 710 such contributions worth a total of \$461,898, for an average contribution of \$651 from the network employees. Republican presidential nominee Sen. John McCain received only 39 contributions totaling \$26,926, for an average donation of \$709.

Ninety-six contributions by broadcast network employees to the Democratic National Committee and the Democratic Senate and House campaign committees totaled \$217,881.

Thirty-eight contributions by broadcast network employees to the Republican National Committee and the Republican Senate and House campaign committees totaled \$23,805.

Among the individuals in the data are ABC News president Lloyd Braun, who contributed \$1,000 to the Our Common Values PAC, which is associated with White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel, and ABC Radio Networks president Jim Robinson, who gave \$250 to GOP presidential candidate Fred Thompson.

Other individual givers found in the data include ABC reporters Sarah Amos, who gave \$1,285 to Democratic presidential aspirant Bill Richardson, Clarisa Ward, who gave \$500 to President Obama, and Kristina Wong, who gave \$400 to the Democratic Party of Virginia.

Notable contributors found in the CBS data include "journalist" Seth Davis, who gave \$2,750 to Obama, CBS Corporation vice president and editor-in-chief Jane Goldman, who contributed \$250 to Obama, CBS Radio "host" Mike Omeara, who gave \$1,471 to Obama, and "journalist" Beverly Williams, who donated \$200 to Obama.

Among NBC contributors were Saturday Night Live producer Jeffrey Ross, who contributed \$500 to Sen. Chris Dodd, D-CN, former NBC Today Show weatherman Willard Scott, who gave \$500 to the Republican National Committee, NBC Universal CFO Jennifer Cabalquinto, whose donations to Obama totaled \$1,200, and NBC Universal "editor" David Mack, with \$250 to Obama and \$2,300 McCain.

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